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THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SITUATION

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This is the first issue of The Fruit and Vegetable Situation, one of a new series of commodity reports recently inaugurated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The Fruit and Vegetable Situation will be issued monthly, and will provide current information on changes in the factors which affect the outlook for production and prices of fruits and vegetables. The present form of this report is experimental. Comments, criticisms and suggestions are welcome.

Summary

With the exception of grapefruit and strawberries, the winter market supply of fruits is below that of a year ago and prices for the next few months probably will average somewhat higher than during the corresponding period of 1936. Supplies of grapefruit and strawberries are indicated to be considerably larger than those of last year, and it is probable that prices of these two fruits will be maintained at somewhat lower levels than during the corresponding period a year earlier.

Vegetable supplies for the late winter and spring markets probably will be plentiful and prices may average slightly under those of the previous season. Exceptions to this general tendency are found in the shortage of potatoes and sweetpotatoes, and perhaps some of the truck crops that were damaged severely by the recent freezes in California.

Prices of potatoes and sweetpotatoes are now substantially higher than they were a year earlier and are likely to continue to advance during the next 2 months. Prices of most other vegetables are now slightly under those of last year and probably will continue at about present levels.

Citrus Fruits

Prices of citrus fruits in general have been somewhat lower thus far in the current marketing season than during the corresponding period of last year. Improvement in consumer purchasing power has not been sufficient to completely offset the price-depressing effect of unusually large supplies. Carlot shipments of grapefruit this season to date have been 45 percent greater than a year earlier. Orange shipments have been 10 percent greater. The largest crop of grapefruit on record is indicated for the 1936-37 season and a continuation of the relatively low grapefruit prices is in prospect. The recent freezes in California are an extremely important development in the outlook for orange and lemon prices for the balance of the present marketing year. If the freeze damage is as extensive as preliminary estimates indicate, the California crops will be reduced materially and prices of oranges and lemons may be expected to average higher during the remainder of the marketing season than they have to date.

The following table presents the Crop Reporting Board's estimate of the 1936-37 citrus crops as of January 1, 1937, with comparisons.

Citrus fruits: Indicated 1936 production on January 1, 1937 with comparisons

Crop and State	Production 1/		
	Indicated 1936	1935	Average 1928-32
	1,000 boxes	1,000 boxes	1,000 boxes
Oranges:			
Calif., all	37,684	33,049	33,022
Valencias	22,500	18,580	---
Navels and Misc.	15,184	14,469	---
Fla., all	21,200	18,000	15,010
Early and midseason	12,000	9,600	---
Valencias	6,500	6,300	---
Tangerines	2,700	2,100	---
Tex.	1,600	747	292
Four other States	635	487	492
Total seven States 2/	61,119	52,283	48,816
Grapefruit:			
Fla., all	17,500	11,500	11,657
Seedless	5,700	4,000	---
Other	11,800	7,500	---
Calif.	2,343	2,267	1,209
Tex.	6,790	2,741	1,457
Ariz.	1,750	1,800	408
Total four States 2/	28,383	18,308	14,730
Lemons:			
Calif., 2/	3/ 8,316	7,787	7,251

1/ Relates to crop of bloom of year shown; picking beginning November 1 in California and September 1 in other States. 2/ Net contents of boxes varies. In California and Arizona the approximate average for oranges is 70 pounds net and grapefruit 60 pounds; in Florida and other States oranges 90 pounds. and grapefruit 80 pounds; California lemons about 76 pounds net.
3/ December 1 forecast.

These figures indicate that unusually large crops of all citrus fruits were in prospect on January 1, 1937. Severe freeze damage in California since the first of January, however, has reduced the crops in that State materially. Preliminary estimates of the damage (as of January 22) indicate that the California crop of Navels and miscellaneous oranges will be about one-fourth less than the January 1 estimate; the crop of Valencias one-third less; grapefruit and lemon harvests almost one-third less. If the actual damage is as great as indicated, the total United States orange crop will be about 2,000,000 boxes less than last year. The lemon crop will also be less than that of last year by about 2,000,000 boxes. The reduction in the California grapefruit crop will not appreciably reduce the total crop, so that the outlook is still for a record production of grapefruit this season.

In the following table prices of the various citrus fruits for the first part of the current season are compared with those of corresponding periods of last year.

Citrus fruits: Price per box at New York and Chicago, specified periods

Crop and market	Av. 1st. half of Jan. 1937	Average Dec. 1936	Average Nov. 1936	Av. 1st. half of Jan. 1936	Average Dec. 1935	Average Nov. 1935
N.Y. :	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Oranges -						
Calif., Navels	3.17	2.93	3.95	3.05	3.43	3.92
Fla.	2.95	2.38	2.72	2.90	2.84	3.12
Grapefruit -						
Fla.	2.22	2.10	1.99	2.67	2.39	2.84
Lemons -						
Calif	5.13	3.85	4.39	5.06	6.45	5.73
Chicago:						
Oranges -						
Calif., Navels	3.23	2.91	3.61	3.13	3.41	3.78
Fla.	2.98	2.46	2.71	3.00	3.01	3.07
Grapefruit -						
Fla.	2.00	1.80	2.06	2.55	2.00	2.59
Lemons -						
Calif.	5.46	4.14	4.47	5.48	6.20	5.72

Carlot shipments indicate that market supplies of grapefruit this season have been about 45 percent greater than a year earlier. These larger supplies have resulted in lower grapefruit prices despite improved consumer purchasing power. While prices of oranges and lemons have averaged somewhat less so far this season than for the same period last year, the decrease has not been as great as in the case of grapefruit. Carlot shipments of oranges to date exceed shipments of a year earlier by only 10 percent, and shipments of lemons have been slightly less this season than last season. Heavy supplies of grapefruit are in prospect for the remainder of the season, accompanied by a continuation of the relatively low prices. The reduction in the California orange crop will undoubtedly result in higher orange prices, particularly during the latter part of the season when market supplies are made up almost entirely of California Valencia oranges.

Apples

Apple prices during the past few months have been at higher levels than during any similar period since the 1930-31 season. Stocks of apples in storage on December 1, 1936, were about 13 percent below average and supplies during the remainder of the marketing year will be relatively small. In view of these small supplies, and with continuing improvement in consumer demand, it is expected that apple prices will make a greater-than-usual rise during the remainder of the marketing year.

The movement of apples into storage is usually completed by December 1, so that storage stocks on that date indicate the supply of apples available for consumption during the winter and spring months. On December 1, 1936, total storage stocks of apples were reported at 26,500,000 bushels, 20 percent less than the stocks on December 1, 1935, and 13 percent below the 1926-35 average. Of the total December 1 stocks this season, about 12,600,000 bushels were eastern apples and 13,900,000 bushels western apples, compared with the 10-year average of 13,600,000 bushels of eastern apples and 16,300,000 of western apples. During the month of December the movement of apples out of storage reduced the total stocks by about 16 percent, as compared with the 1932-36 average December reduction of 13 percent. If this greater-than-average rate of out-of-storage movement continues, supplies of apples during the latter part of the marketing year will be extremely small.

The average price of apples received by growers at local markets on January 15 was 110.9 cents per bushel compared with 106.0 on December 15, and 81.3 on January 15, 1936. In the Pacific Coast States the grower price ranged from 85 to 95 cents per bushel and in the other principal producing regions from 110 to 135.

The weighted average auction price of western apples at New York was $2.21 per box in December and $2.09 in November, compared with $1.84 and $1.93 for the same months a year ago. On the Chicago market western apple prices averaged $1.85 in December and $1.86 in November, compared with $1.39 and $1.64 in December and November of 1935.

The following table shows prices of eastern and western apples by varieties on the New York and Chicago markets this season with comparisons.

Apples: L.c.l. jobbing and auction prices per bushel by varieties, specified periods

Market and variety	Jan. 1937 1st week	Dec. 1936	Nov. 1936	Jan. 1936 1st week	Dec. 1935	Nov. 1935
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Eastern apples (l.c.l. jobber prices):						
N.Y. market-						
Greenings - N.Y.	1.30	1.33	1.36	1.12	1.06	1.00
Baldwins - N.Y.	1.38	1.37	1.20	1.04	.93	.72
Yorks - Va.	1.46	1.45	1.21	.92	---	---
McIntosh - Mass.	1.98	2.01	2.10	1.35	1.38	1.45
Chicago market-						
McIntosh - Mich.	1.70	1.74	1.70	1.28	1.36	1.26
Greenings - Mich.	1.38	1.42	1.39	1.12	1.22	1.04
Delicious - Mich.	1.88	1.69	1.68	1.17	1.27	1.07
Western apples (auction prices):						
N.Y. market-						
Delicious - Wash.	2.33	2.26	2.24	1.63	1.93	2.01
Romes - Wash.	1.87	1.80	1.89	1.66	1.79	1.83
Spitzenberg - Wash.	1.79	1.76	1.97	1.59	1.63	1.84
Chicago market-						
Delicious - Wash.	2.06	1.92	1.93	1.40	1.43	1.49
Romes - Wash.	1.67	1.66	1.59	1.57	1.35	1.59
Jonathan - Wash.	1.92	1.54	1.66	1.17	1.11	1.43

Strawberries

The largest production of strawberries since 1933 is forecast for Florida, the earliest shipping State. This year's crop is expected to be 45 percent greater than the crop of last year. Strawberry acreage in the early States which market their product after the Florida season, is estimated to be about 14 percent greater than that of last year, but still almost 14 percent below the 1928-32 average. Carlot shipments through January 16 this year totaled 205 cars, compared with 69 to a corresponding date in 1936. Prices are now below those of a year ago, and it is probable that they will decline sharply during the next few months. On the New York market, Florida strawberries sold at 14 cents per pint (l.c.l. basis) on January 15, 1937, compared with 17 cents on January 15, 1936.

The following tabulation shows estimates of the 1937 acreage and production of early strawberries, with comparisons:

States	Acreage			Production		
	1937	1936	5-yr. av. 1928-32	1937	1936	5-yr. av. 1928-32
	Acres	Acres	Acres	1,000 crates	1,000 crates	1,000 crates
Fla.	9,200	8,900	7,300	644	445	523
Other early	29,200	25,650	33,970	---	1,605	1,915

Potatoes

Owing to the small supply of 1936 late potatoes going into storage for winter and spring marketings, potato prices advanced sharply during the last month, and indications are that, aside from minor recessions from time to time, the sharp upward trend will continue during the next 2 or 3 months. The peak in prices for the 1936-37 season is expected to be reached about the middle of April, at which time it is not unusual for heavy supplies of new potatoes to move from the Southern States. Prices of early potatoes probably will average somewhat higher than a year earlier.

The supply of all potatoes for the first half of 1937 is now indicated to be the smallest since 1930, when there were unusually small January 1 stocks of old potatoes and a relatively small production of new potatoes. The indications are that only about 78,000,000 bushels of old potatoes were in country warehouses on January 1, 1937, and early reports from growers in the Southern States which market nearly all of the new crop before July 1 indicate that, with average growing conditions, the early crop may approximate 26,000,000 bushels. The production range on the intended acreage reported is from 18,000,000 to 30,000,000 bushels, the actual size of the early crop depending upon growing conditions. On the basis of this information, the prospective total supply of potatoes for the first 6 months of 1937 is slightly in excess of 104,000,000 bushels, compared with 124,700,000 bushels available for the corresponding period of last year, and the 1928-32 average of 121,500,000 bushels.

Potatoes: Acreage and production of early crop and January 1 stocks of old crop, 1937 with comparisons

	Acreage			Production stocks		
	5-yr. av. 1928-32	1936	1937	5-yr. av. 1928-32	1936	1937
	Acres	Acres	Acres	1,000 bu.	1,000 bu.	1,000 bu.
Fall	2,400	1,700	2,100	120	85	147
Early (1)	38,400	29,700	38,500	3,833	2,807	---
Early (2)	82,400	75,900	98,300	8,818	11,955	---
Second early	50,000	46,000	55,400	6,243	4,225	---
Total 4 groups	173,200	153,300	194,300	19,014	19,072	
Stocks of 1936 crop held on Jan.1:	---	---	---	102,520	105,669	78,011

The final crop report for 1936 indicated a total United States production of approximately 330,000,000 bushels of potatoes, or about 2,000,000 bushels less than were reported in November. The 18 surplus producing late potato States have 240,254,000 bushels, or about 31,000,000 less than their 1935 production and 20,000,000 bushels below the 1928-32 average crop. The eight Eastern States have 6,500,000 bushels more than in 1935, and 2,500,000 more than average, but the ten Central States show a great shortage, nearly 43,000,000 bushels less than in 1935 and 30,000,000 below average. Production in the twelve Western States is about 3,500,000 bushels below the 1935 crop, but about 5,200,000 bushels above the 5-year average.

Wholesale prices of eastern potatoes at New York City advanced from $2.41 per 100 pounds the first week of December to about $2.77 the first week of January. They averaged $1.72 a year ago. Idaho Russet Burbanks at New York advanced from $3.23 per 100-pound sack to $3.42 during the last month and now compare with $2.25 per sack a year ago. At Chicago, prices of northern Round Whites averaged $2.28 per 100-pound sack during the first week of January, against $1.88 a month earlier and $1.19 a year ago. Prices of other varieties at Chicago followed the same general trend, Idaho Russet Burbanks averaging $3.18 per 100-pound sack the first week of January, compared with $2.53 in the corresponding period of December and $1.89 in early January 1936.

Shipping-point prices and cash-to-grower prices also followed the broad upward swing of terminal prices during the last month. Details of these changes in important shipping sections are shown in the following table.

Potatoes: Shipping-point prices, 1937 and 1936

Locality	F.o.b. per 100-lb. sack			Cash-to-grower, bulk per 100-lb.		
	Week ended-			Week ended-		
	Jan. 9, 1937	Dec. 5, 1936	Jan.11 1936	Jan. 9, 1937	Dec. 5, 1936	Jan.11, 1936
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Presque Isle, Me.	2.21	1.88	1.16	2.06	1.75	0.97
Rochester, N. Y.	2.16	1.93	1.25	1.73	1.57	.93
Riverhead, L. I.	2.76	2.33	----	2.58	2.18	---
Grand Rapids, Mich.	2.08	1.78	1.06	1.72	1.37	.78
Waupaca, Wis.	2.05	1.66	.95	1.62	1.30	.65
Idaho Falls, Idaho	2.38	1.78	1.06	1.95	1.54	.84

New potatoes were moving from the South at the rate of 5 to 10 cars daily, considerably more than the movement of a year ago, and Florida Bliss Triumphs were returning shippers in the southern part of that State about $2.90 per 100 pounds, while wholesale dealers in New York received $3.50 on this new stock.

Shipments of old potatoes reached nearly 4,000 cars during the last week of December, but decreased to about 3,600 cars the first full week of January and were not quite so large as the output of a year ago. The most active shipping States were Maine, Michigan, Colorado and Idaho. By January 9, nearly 80,000 cars of potatoes had been shipped by rail or boat from the 18 surplus producing States, compared with 67,000 to the same time last season. The larger rail shipments this year do not indicate larger marketings but are due to the fact that production is relatively small in nearby market areas from which potatoes are usually moved by motor truck.

For the United States as a whole, the average price to growers for potatoes advanced to $1.22 per bushel by January 15, compared with $1.06 on December 15, 1936; about 65 cents on January 15, 1936; and a 1909-13 average of 64 cents per bushel. The average of $1.22 is the highest January average price to growers since 1929.

Truck Crops

Unusually low temperatures during the third week of January have been reported in the Imperial Valley of California but the full extent of the damage to growing vegetables has not yet been determined. It is reported that lettuce was badly frozen, carrot tops were much discolored and the Delta celery crop severely damaged. On the basis of information available prior to this freeze, however, the outlook was for plentiful supplies of truck crops in the Southern States and California. With few exceptions, acreages planted were increased over 1936 and shipments to date have been generally larger than a year earlier. Aside from the effects of the freeze damage on the crops mentioned, it is likely that supplies of truck crops generally will be plentiful during the remainder of the winter marketing season and that prices will average slightly under those of a year earlier.

Slightly larger acreages of vegetables have been planted this year in Cuba, Puerto Rico and Mexico, but weather conditions have not been favorable for a normal growth except in Mexico. Heavy rains in Cuba and Puerto Rico have lowered yields and quality. Exports to the United States from these three areas combined, therefore, may not exceed those of last year, which were about double the small exports of the 1933-34 season.

Snap beans.- Present crop conditions and acreages planted indicate a production of winter crop snap beans in Florida 42 percent above the 1936 production. The acreage was reported to be only 7 percent greater than last year but the yield per acre is expected to be one-third larger. Present market prices reflect the larger supplies available in that they are considerably under those of a year ago. Higher prices for early snap beans may be expected as the volume of shipments from Florida declines.

Beets.- The production forecast of beets in Texas, the principal source of the winter market supply, is 16 percent below 1936. Prices are likely to rise and it is expected that the season's average will be above that of last year.

Cabbage.- A large new crop of cabbage in the Southern States, which started to move to market earlier and in larger volume than a year ago, resulted in considerably lower prices in December and January of this season than during a corresponding period a year ago. Because of the unusually large crop in South Carolina and an early heavy movement from Texas, the seasonal decline occurred earlier than usual this year. Although prices declined on both the Danish (1936 crop) and the new Domestic type from the South, declines were much more marked on the latter type. It seems likely that most of the seasonal price decline has already occurred and that prices of new crop cabbage may remain near present levels until after the peak of the harvest.

Stocks of Danish-type cabbage in growers' and dealers' hands on January 1, 1937, were reported to be the smallest on record, with the exception of the small stocks on hand January 1, 1934. Stocks on January 1, 1937, were estimated at 49,520 tons, compared with 78,180 tons last year and 35,870 tons on January 1, 1934. Production of cabbage in the fall and early States in 1937 is indicated to be 350,100 tons compared with the record crop of 353,600 tons in 1934. Thus, it is indicated that for the late winter marketing period there will be plentiful supplies of cabbage and that prices generally may remain at about the present low levels for the next several months.

On the New York market sales in late January of Texas domestic round-type cabbage were made at $1.75 - $2 per Lettuce crate, compared with $2.37½ - $2.50 in December, and $1.75 - $2.25 during a corresponding period in January 1936. Recent sales of New York Danish stock were reported at $20 - $22 bulk per ton, about the same price range as in January 1936. On the Chicago market recent sales of Texas domestic round were made at $1.50 per Lettuce crate compared with $1.75 - $2.15 a month earlier, and $1.75 - $2 in January 1936.

Prices at shipping points reacted in much the same manner, as indicated by the following table:

Cabbage: Shipping point prices, specified periods

Locality and type	Item	Week ended Jan.23 1937	Dec.19 1936	Nov.21 1936	Jan.25 1936
		Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Western New York, Danish	Sacked per ton, f.o.b.	14-16	17-20	17-22	14-20
Brownsville, Texas, Domestic round	Lettuce crates f.o.b.	.60-.80	1.00-1.45	---	.90-1.00

Carlot shipments of the new Southern crop during the week ended January 23 totaled 428 cars, compared with 449 the preceding week, and with 295 during the corresponding week in 1936. A total of 2,886 carloads were shipped this season to January 23. Up to a corresponding date in 1936 there were only 1,779 carloads shipped. Carlot shipments of Northern Danish cabbage during the week ended January 23 totaled 186, compared with 256 the preceding week, and 197 for the corresponding week a year earlier.

Carrots.- A decrease of 18 percent in production of early crop carrots from Arizona and Texas is indicated. The combined production of early crop from the above States and the California fall crop, however, is indicated to be 17 percent larger. Prices probably will follow pretty much the same course as last year, ranging slightly higher as the marketings of the large fall crop are completed.

Celery.- Production in the two early States, California (spring crop) and Florida, is indicated to be 16 percent larger than last year. The above estimate does not take into account any recent freeze damage in California. The Florida crop is expected to be 19 percent greater than last year. Prices at market centers on January 15 were reported to be slightly lower than last year and unless the freeze damage in California is severe, they may be expected to continue at these lower levels.

Onions.- Onion prices at shipping points and large terminal markets showed only minor fluctuations during the last month with prices in the first 3 weeks in January holding at practically the same levels as a month earlier. During November there was a rather substantial rise in prices of mid-western and eastern grown stocks. Western Valencias have shown very little change in price at terminal markets since the season low point was reached in October. In view of the relatively large stocks of late onions in warehouses on January 1, 1937, it is expected that onion prices will not show the usual seasonal rise, but will change very little during the next month or 6 weeks. Price movements in late February and early March will depend largely on prospects for the new crop, particularly Texas Bermudas. The preliminary estimate of acreage for the early onion States is 31 percent below that of last year, but 5 percent above the 1928-32 average acreage.

Stocks of the 1936 late crop of onions on hand January 1, 1937, totaled 3,605,000 sacks (100 pounds) compared with 3,368,000 sacks a year earlier. This year's January 1 stocks are larger than in any year from 1929 to date with the exception of those on hand January 1, 1933.

Stocks on hand January 1, are 30.5 percent of the total production in the late States in 1936, while those on January 1, 1936, were 33.1 percent of the 1935 production. Production in 1932 may be compared with that in 1936, since the crop in both years was relatively large. On January 1, 1933 stocks of late onions on hand were estimated at 3,958,000 sacks, or 32.5 percent of the previous year's large crop. No information is available relative to the size of the early onion crop but the acreage planted or to be planted is indicated to be about 31 percent less than in 1936 but 23 percent larger than in 1933.

On the New York City terminal market, yellow stock from western New York points sold recently at 55-75 cents per 50-pound sack. A month earlier the price range was the same, while in January 1936, 50-pound sacks were quoted at $1.10 - $1.35. Since October prices of Western Valencias have fluctuated very little and within a narrow range. Recent sales were made at $1.05 -$1.15 per 50-pound sack. These prices compare with $1.55- $1.65 a year ago. Much the same situation has prevailed on the Chicago wholesale market. As shown in the following table, shipping-point prices have followed similar trends.

Onions: Prices per 50-pound sack, carloads, f.o.b. shipping points, specified periods

Locality	Week ended Jan. 23 1937	Dec. 19, 1936	Nov.21, 1936	Oct.24, 1936	Jan.25, 1936
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
Western N. Y.	50-56	55-58	40-45	43-45	1.04-1.10
Grand Rapids, Mich...	40-47½	45-50	37½-40	37½-40	90-1.05

A total of 497 carloads from the important late producing States were shipped during the week ended January 23 compared with 763 the preceding week and 359 during a corresponding week in 1936. Shipments this season to January 23 from the important late States totaled 14,385 carloads compared with 14,789 during a corresponding date last season.

Spinach.- This year's total acreage of spinach in the early group of States (California, Louisiana, South Carolina, Texas) is 7 percent greater than last year's total acreage. Total production in Texas, where 94 percent of this year's acreage is planted, is indicated to be 27 percent larger than last year's total crop (including the production from 6,400 acres taken by canners). Because of the large supply of spinach available this season, prices are slightly lower than those of a year earlier and probably will continue below last year's levels through the remainder of the early marketing season.

Tomatoes.- This year's acreage of winter crop tomatoes in South Florida is estimated to be 32 percent greater than that of last year, and is the largest on record. These increased plantings would indicate an unusually large production of winter tomatoes, which together with a record large fall crop, totaling 609,000 bushels, point to a plentiful supply for the winter marketing season. Shipments to date from domestic sources have moved at a slower rate than to a corresponding date last year except in recent weeks when they were larger.

Imports this season through January 16 were equivalent to 1,228 carloads, compared with 1,130 carloads to a corresponding date in 1936. Owing to unfavorable weather conditions in Cuba and Mexico, it is likely that the season's total imports from these areas will be less than in the previous season when they were at relatively high levels.

Watermelons in Southeastern States.-In view of the relatively high prices received by growers for watermelons in the four Southeastern States (Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina) in the 1936 season, it is probable that the acreage planted to watermelons in 1937 in these areas will be increased sharply. This larger acreage with average yields would result in a larger production than was harvested in 1936, and cause prices to decline to slightly lower levels. If yields per acre were somewhat larger than average, the expanded acreage would increase production sharply and prices for the 1937 season would average much lower than in 1936.

On the basis of the relationship existing between the acreage planted to watermelons in the four Southeastern States and the prices received by growers the previous year, it is indicated that the total acreage planted in 1937 to watermelons in these areas may be increased by at least one fourth. This increase would mean a total for the four States of 137,000 acres compared with 108,800 acres harvested in 1936, and it would be the largest available for harvest since 1931.

A review of the average yield per acre for the Southeastern States indicates that yields have declined sharply during the last 15 years. For the 5-year period 1922-26 the average yield was 329 melons per acre. During the next 5 years it was 313 melons, while for the last 5 years the average was only 208 melons per acre. This sharp decline in yields during this period is not dissimilar to the decline that has taken place in many of the other important truck crops for fresh market shipment. It may be observed that as the acreages of these crops expanded sharply during the last 15 years, yields per acre declined fairly sharply.

On the basis of present acreage indications and with yields equal to the average of the last 5 years, a production of 28,500,000 melons is indicated for these four States. If it is assumed that yields will be equal to the lowest yield of the last 5 years, production would total 23,300,000 melons, but if the highest yields are assumed a production of 32,800,000 melons may be expected. Since watermelon growers in the Southeastern States received relatively high prices for the 1936 crop, there is a possibility that better cultural methods will be employed in the production of the 1937 crop. This could take the form of better care of fields, heavier applications of fertilizers, the purchase of better seed, etc. If such action should be taken and growing conditions should be favorable, higher yields per acre would be obtained. If the per-acre yield should be somewhere between the average of the last 5 years and the average of the preceding 5 years - say 260 melons per acre - production on the indicated acreage would total about 35,600,000 melons. This would compare with 24,740,000 melons produced in 1936 and with 26,000,000 melons, the recent 5-year (1932-36) average production in these States.

On the basis of the lower indicated production for 1937 (based upon the prospective plantings and yields equal to the average of the last 5 years), and on demand conditions somewhat improved over those of 1936, prices received by watermelon growers in the four Southeastern States in 1937 would average slightly lower than they did in 1936, or about $125 per car of 1,000 melons, against $146 in 1936. On the other hand, if the larger indicated crop were produced and demand conditions were improved, the price to growers in the four States probably would average much lower, possibly as low as $80 per car.

Truck crops: Acreage, production, and January 1 stocks, 1937 with comparisons

Commodity and group	Acreage: 5-year average 1928-32	Acreage: 1936	Acreage: 1937	Unit	Production - Stocks: 5-year average 1928-32	Production - Stocks: 1936	Production - Stocks: 1937
	Acres	Acres	Acres				
Asparagus,				1,000			
Early 1/	74,560	79,900	80,300	crates	7,249	7,925	---
Snap beans,				1,000			
Fall	12,000	14,900	24,100	bush.	1,013	1,295	2,286
Early (1)	9,660	30,000	32,000	"	936	1,800	2,560
Total,2 groups.	21,660	44,900	56,100	"	1,949	3,095	4,846
Beets,							
Early	4,710	7,400	5,600	"	830	2/ 1,036	836
Cabbage,							
Fall	810	1,920	2,800	tons	5,900	9,500	22,200
Early	37,560	57,100	58,000	"	2/211,000	2/307,300	327,900
Total,2 groups.	38,370	59,020	60,800	"	216,900	316,800	350,100
Stock of 1936 Danish crop on hand,Jan. 1					3/ 66,075	78,180	49,520
Carrots,				1,000			
Fall	3,280	7,100	10,400	bush.	1,830	3,337	4,576
Early	8,460	11,000	8,800	"	2/ 1,840	2/1,877	1,533
Total,2 groups.	11,740	18,100	19,200	"	3,670	5,214	6,109
Cauliflower,fall and winter	7,990	8,800	9,750	crates	2,261	1,968	2,356
Celery, fall and winter	7,180	9,050	11,500	"	1,240	1,538	1,840
Early	7,620	8,900	10,150	"	2,533	2,538	2,957
Total,2 groups.	14,800	17,950	21,650	"	3,773	4,076	4,797
Cucumbers,				1,000			
Fall	1,180	1,600	1,600	bush.	93	160	96
Eggplant,							
Fall	1,170	980	1,350	"	210	133	245
Lettuce,				1,000			
Early	49,740	36,010	35,250	crates	5,821	3/4,798	5,037
Onions,				1,000			
Early	23,060	34,970	24,200	sacks	2/ 2,30?	2/3,302	
Jan.1 stocks				"	3/ 3,069	3,368	3,605
Peppers,				1,000			
Fall	2,010	2,400	3,600	bush.	406	350	640
Spinach,							
Fall	2,940	2,900	2,600	"	888	754	780
Early	30,860	51,450	62,000	"	7,599	7,596	11,849
Total,2 groups.	33,800	54,350	64,600	"	8,487	8,350	12,629
Tomatoes,				1,000			
Fall	4,010	7,300	11,700	bush.	256	584	609
Early (1)	10,990	11,000	18,500	"	1,218	990	
Total,2 groups.	15,000	18,300	30,200	"	1,474	1,574	

1/ Includes asparagus for market and canning.
2/ Includes some quantities not harvested on account of market conditions.
3/ Four-year (1929-32) average.

Truck crops: L.c.l. terminal prices and carlot shipments, specified periods

Commodity and State	Unit	Terminal prices: Chicago Jan. 15, 1936	Chicago Jan. 15, 1937	New York Jan. 15, 1936	New York Jan. 15, 1937	Carlot shipments: Season to Jan. 18, 1936	Season to Jan. 16, 1937
		Dolls.	Dolls.	Dolls.	Dolls.	Cars	Cars
Snap beans 1/	bushel					1,830	3,252
Fla. (green)	basket	3.12	2.00	2.88	2.00		
(wax)	"	3.50	2.82	2.75	2.38		
Beets						144	82
Tex.	1/2 crate	1.12	1.08	1.32	1.06		
Cabbage	Lettuce					1,484	2,458
Tex.(Domestic)	crate	2.00	1.55	2.25	1.75		
Carrots	crate					2,487	3,676
Calif.	6 dozen	2.88	2.80	3.62	3.62		
Tex.	1/2 crate	---	1.12	1.70	1.68		
Celery						4,214	5,330
Calif.	20" crate						
	4½ -3 doz.	3.12	2.88	3.50	3.38		
Onions 2/						14,430	13,981
Yellows	50 lbs.	1.00	.56	1.30	.62		
Valencias	" "	1.31	.88	1.62	1.08		
Spinach, (savoy)	bushel					2,463	2,656
Tex.	basket	.78	.75	.95	.82		

1/ Carlot shipments include lima beans.
2/ Chicago onion prices are based on carlot sales.